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Mrs. S.Vijayalakshmi

M.A., M.Phil,

Assistant Professor, Department Of English,

Sri Ramakrishna College Of Arts and Science,

Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

Vijimaxin@Gmail.Com

Exploration of Indian Pop culture through parodies in Judy Balan's *Half Boyfriend* and *Two Fates: The Story of my Divorce*.

Abstract

Parody is a cultural spectacle and it is used as a significant factor for creative expression. A Parodist takes another's material to make their parodying effective and recognizable. In France, Parody is used to evoke laughter. Judy Balan, an Indian writer in English is an ardent blogger and reviewer who has authored an outright comedy titled *Two Fates: The Story of My Divorce* and *Half Boyfriend*. Her story parodies the bestseller *Two States: The Story of my Marriage and Half Girlfriend* by Chetan Bhagat. Through parodies she evokes laughter and explores the Indian Pop Culture which is ignored in the works of Chetan Bhagat.

The term Parody is derived from the Greek Parodia which concentrates on the style of the original. It is otherwise called subversive mimicry of the original. The most important parodists in Greek literature are Aristophanes, Plato and Lucian. Aristophanes parodies the tragic style of *Euripides*. Plato is subtle in *Symposium* and Lucian parodies the *Olympian gods*. Just as the greek parodic was passed on to Rome, Parodic spirit transferred to the Middle Ages from Rome. During Middle Ages, the parody provided path for new literary consciousness. Any holiday or festival was parodied. The Indian writers have also parodied

the great works. For example, Shashi Tharoor has parodied the *Mahabharata*. Judy Balan parodied the works of Chetan Bhagat -*Half Girlfriend* and *Two States: The Story of my Marriage*.

Judy Balan is a comedy writer. She is popular for her wry, after self deprecatory humour. She is the author of *Two Fates: The Story of my Divorce*, *Half Boyfriend* and *How to Stop your Grownup from making Bad Decisions*. *Half Boyfriend* is the parody of Chetan Bagat's *Half Girlfriend*. In this novel, Manav, a rural prince of village in Bihar meets the rich Delhi girl Rhea. Manav uses his charm of not speaking English correctly in order to befriend Rhea, but she doesn't accept his love. He starts stalking her and tries to make her understand that she is also interested in him. His only aim is to win the heart of Rhea, because once he marries her she will be a queen of his village.

The author parodied even the names of the characters Madhav Jha as Manav and Riya as Rhea. There are series of unbelievable incidents, through which Judy Balan brings out Indian Pop culture in a hilarious manner which is ignored in Chetan Bhagat's *Half Girlfriend*. Madhav Jha, a rural boy of Bihar falls in love with a rich and beautiful girl Riya Somani.

Madhav wants to make her girlfriend but she refuses, he demands physical pleasure from her, offended by this she parts with him and marries her childhood friend Rohan and settles in London. Unable to bear Riya's separation, he goes to his hometown and support his mother in running her school. There is no proper classes or restroom in the school, he decides to request Bill Gates to visit his school in order to raise funds, but to do so he wants to give speech in English. In the course of his struggle, he comes across Riya, who is now a divorcee, she helps him prepare the speech. After the speech, Riya leaves a letter for him which unveils that she is in the last stage of lung cancer and has only three months left to survive and leaves India. After three years, Madhav finds that she is alive and goes in search of her in New

York. After three months he finds her and the two reunited and consummate their relationship.

Balan's another work *Two Fates: The Story of My Divorce* is also the parody of Chetan Bhagat's *Two States: The Story of My Marriage*. "Humor and comedy is one key ingredient Judy feels that she cannot do without in the books she reads and pens. "If you've read *Two States*, you'd get all the jokes in my book", confessed the author sheepishly." ("Interview with Judy Balan")

*Two Fates: The Story of My Divorce* is a story of a couple- Rishab Khanna working in Accenture, Punjabi guy and Deepika (working in ad agency) wanted to become psychotherapist because she believes herself as psychologist, a Tamilian. Both loved each other convinced their families and got married after a long struggle. After two years of companionship the couples are fighting for divorce having no strong reason for their fight, through which Judy wants to express the Indian pop culture which is not reluctant to break up the bond for flimsy reasons. Only few clashes, here and there. In two years both their families become close and they were against the couples decision of divorce. At the end of the novel, they get reunited. At the end they get reunited with the help of their families.

*Two States* is story of a couple Krish and Ananya, who is from two different states of India Punjab and Tamil Nadu, who are in love and want to get married. They try to convince their parents. They graduate and get job. In order to convince Ananya's parents, Krish helps her father in preparing Power Point Presentation and Ananya convinces Krish's parents by helping one of Krish's cousin in getting married. Once they convince their parents, they take their family for a trip to Goa which ends in a quarrel between Ananya's parents and Krish's mother. Ananya and Krish try their best to bring their families together and gain success. They get married with their parents permission. Judy Balan has brought out the cultural differences between the couple in a comic manner. She also brought out Indian Mass Culture

which connects mass audience. Even her books shed light on the most relevant issues of the country right now. Her satirical and hilarious take; make the stories relatable as well as worthy of making her one of the Indian pop culture novelist.

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